

April 2016



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South Carolina Farm Service Agency

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State Committee:

Robert Battle, Chairperson
Warren Dixon
Mary Frances Koon
Don Sharp
Tom Trantham

SC FSA Welcomes New State Executive Director - Wilfred L. Pace

The South Carolina Farm Service Agency welcomes Wilfred L. Pace as its' new State Executive Director.

As Executive Director for the SC FSA, Pace oversees all aspects of federal farm program delivery for an agency that employs over 300 people (state and county office staff and elected county committee members) and on average, issues more than \$154 million annually in commodity, conservation, disaster, and credit benefits to producers across the state.

State Executive Director:
Wilfred L. Pace

Administrative Officer:
Toni Turner

Farm Programs Chief:
Amy Turner

Farm Loan Programs Chief:
Frank Sligh

Producers can contact their [local FSA Office](#) for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Important Dates and Deadlines:

May 15: Acreage Reporting Deadline for Tomatoes (planted 3/15 - 4/30).

May 30: Offices Closed for Memorial Day

July 4: Offices Closed for Independence Day

July 15: Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring and Summer Seeded Crops

August 15: Acreage Reporting Deadline for Tomatoes (planted 7/1 - 7/15).

Mr. Pace is a conservation and agricultural professional who brings extensive service and experiences to the state of South Carolina via the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. Mr. Pace served as a dedicated Natural Resources Conservationist and Environmental Manager for over 37 years. He is a native of Lumber City, Georgia and a 1981 graduate of Fort Valley State University in Fort Valley, Georgia where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture Education. Pace is married to the former Sharon Ann Williams of Baxley, Georgia and they are the proud parents of two children Christina Juruth Pace, and Private First Class Christopher Lewis Pace, United States Marine Corps. They also provided parental nurturing to Shamonica Robinson and Pamela Kirk.

One of the highlights of Mr. Pace's career was being assigned as USDA Small Farmer Liaison for the Southeast and the Caribbean by former NRCS Chief Bruce Knight through the Small-Scale Limited Resource Farmers Initiative. Through his leadership, the initiative provided over \$16 million to more than 1800 participants through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Due to the success of the initiative, many of the findings and recommendations were incorporated into the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bill Legislation. Throughout his career, Mr. Pace has showed his compassion and commitment to equal opportunity, civil rights, and outreach and has received numerous awards and accolades for those efforts including the State of South Carolina Civil Rights and Outreach Award.

Pace is a resident of Orangeburg, South Carolina where he has served land users and agrarian communities across South Carolina and many other states in the Southeast. He also serves on the Board of Deacons at the Historic Bull Swamp Baptist Church. We look forward to the contributions he will make to FSA in South Carolina.

USDA Approves Emergency Forest Restoration Assistance for Counties in SC

Most all counties in SC are approved to accept applications for the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) to address flood damages.

EFRP provides payments to eligible owners of nonindustrial private forest (NIPF) land to enable the

owners to carry out emergency measures to restore land damaged by a natural disaster. EFRP sign-up will begin on April 1, 2016, and end on May 30, 2016.

After applications are received the South Carolina Forestry Commission will provide technical assistance by evaluating the damage and developing a plan to restore the NIPF land. The local FSA county committee will determine land eligibility and approve applications.

In order to meet eligibility requirements, NIPF land must have existing tree cover or had tree cover immediately before the natural disaster occurred and be sustainable for growing trees. The land must also be owned by any nonindustrial private individual, group, association, corporation or other private legal entity that has definitive decision-making authority over the land. The natural disaster must have resulted in damage that if untreated would impair or endanger the natural resources on the land and/or materially affect future use of the land. Individuals may receive up to 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoring the damage. The minimum qualifying cost of restoration is \$1000 per participant, approximately five acres, unless a waiver is requested and approved.

Please contact your local County FSA office for more information or visit <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

USDA Regional Climate Change Hubs

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack established the first ever [USDA Regional Climate Change Hubs](#) in February 2014 at seven locations around the country to provide more information to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners on the increasing risks of fires, pests, floods, and droughts associated with a changing climate. For information on the Climate Hub in your Region, visit <http://climatehubs.oce.usda.gov> and Click on the region to learn more.

Changing Administrative Counties

Producers who wish to transfer their farm records to a different administrative county for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 must file a request no later than August 1, 2016. Restrictions do apply when transferring to an office other than the county in which the land is physically located. Contact your local FSA office for more information. Producers who wish to transfer their farm records to a different administrative county for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 must file a request no later than August 1, 2016. Restrictions do apply when transferring to an office other than the county in which the land is physically located. Contact your local FSA office for more information.

Double-Cropping

Each year, state committees will review and approve or disapprove county committee recommended changes or additions to specific combinations of crops.

Double-cropping is approved when the two specific crops have the capability to be planted and carried to maturity for the intended use, as reported by the producer, on the same acreage within a crop year under normal growing conditions. The specific combination of crops recommended by the county committee must be approved by the state committee.

Double-cropping is approved in SC on a county-by-county basis. Contact your local FSA Office for a list of approved double-cropping combinations for your county.

A crop following a cover crop terminated according to termination guidelines is approved double cropping and these combinations do not have to be approved by the state committee.

Final Planting Dates

All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for more information on the final planting date for specific crops. The final planting dates vary by crop, planting period and county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific planting deadlines. The timely planting of a crop, by the final planting date, may prevent loss of program benefits.

Enrollment Period for 2016 USDA Safety Net Coverage Ends Aug. 1

Producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can visit FSA county offices through Aug. 1, 2016, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016.

Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Borrower Training

Borrower training is available for all Farm Service Agency customers. This training is required for all direct loan applicants, unless the applicant has a waiver issued by the agency.

Borrower training includes instruction in production and financial management. The purpose is to help the applicant develop and improve skills that are necessary to successfully operate a farm and build equity in the operation. It aims to help the producer become financially successful. Borrower training is provided, for a fee, by agency approved vendors. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager for a list of approved vendors.

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

NRCS Announces EQIP Signup for Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative, April 30 Deadline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) signup with **application deadline of April 30** for private landowners to apply for financial and technical assistance to facilitate the restoration of the Northern bobwhite quail and other early successional habitat in South Carolina.

This signup will help assist the Northern bobwhite quail and many other early successional species, which have experienced a dramatic decline in South Carolina over the past several decades due to large-scale habitat changes such as urbanization, modern agriculture practices, and intensive forestry practices.

“South Carolina NRCS, in conjunction with conservation partners across the state, understand the importance of increasing our efforts to restore the Northern bobwhite quail,” said Ann English, State Conservationist for NRCS in South Carolina. “Through targeted management practices, private landowners can help bring this iconic bird back to our state.”

The counties eligible to signup for this EQIP funding are Allendale, Calhoun, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Hampton, Lee, Newberry, Orangeburg and Union. These counties have been designated as being part of a “focal area” for bobwhite quail, having landscapes with the highest bobwhite quail restoration potential due to current and projected land cover and land use trends.

SC NRCS aims to help private landowners “bring back the quail” through the implementation of conservation management practices that will help restore suitable early successional habitat. These practices include prescribed burning, tree thinning, brush management, weed

control, and the planting of pollinators and native grasses, as well as the installation of field borders, filter strips, and hedgerows.

To learn more about financial and technical assistance available to help South Carolina farmers and other landowners improve and protect their land, visit NRCS in South Carolina's website at www.sc.nrcs.usda.gov, or visit your local NRCS office. USDA service center locations are listed at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).